

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 171500Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1044

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

US LIAISON PEKING 022

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE ECJ2

EUDAC VAIHINGEN GE

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

4UFRMAA/COMSIXTH FLT

COMNAVINTCOM ALEXANDRIA VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

CNO WASHDC

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SUBJECT: FURTHER REACTION TO ABROGATION OF SOVIET-EGYPTIAN TREATY

1. PRESS. LOCAL DAILIES MARCH 17 TURN TO FOREIGN REACTION OF
PRESIDENT SADAT'S ABROGATION OF 1971 SOVIET-EGYPTIAN FRIENDSHIP
TREATY. ALL PAPERS FEATURE COMMENTS BY NCNA THAT EGYPTIAN
DECISION REPRESENTS DEFEAT FOR BANKRUPT SOVIET POLICY IN
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ARAB WORLD, AFRICAN AND THIRD WORLD. EGYPTIAN PRESS QUOTES PEK-

ING DAILIES AS GLOATING OVER THIS DEFEAT OF "NEW CAESARS" IN KREMLIN. DAILIES ALSO FEATURE POSITIVE COMMENTS BY WEST GERMAN, BRITISH AND AMERICAN PAPERS. LOCAL PRESS GENERALLY DOWN-PLAY USG REACTION, ALTHOUGH AHRAM CARRIES SHORT FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE QUOTING STATEMENT BY SECRETARY APPROVING GENERAL LINES OF SADAT POLICIES SINCE 1973. ALL DAILIES REPORT TELEGRAM OF SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT SADAT FROM SHAIKH OF AL-AZHAR, ABD AL-HALIM MAHMUD, ALTHOUGH FULL CONTENTS OF TELEGRAM NOT MENTIONED. DAILIES ALSO REPORT TELEGRAMS OF SUPPORT FOR SADAT DECISION FROM VARIOUS POLITICAL GROUPS BOTH IN DELTA AND UPPER EGYPT. ALL EDITORIAL COMMENTS MARCH 17 ARE CRITICAL OF SOVIET UNION AND WELCOME NEW EGYPTIAN "INDEPENDENCE." AKHBAR ASSAILS SOVIETS' REPEATED CALLS FOR CONVOCAION OF MEPC AS HYPOCRITICAL, CITING REFUSAL OF MAIN ME SOVIET ALLY-SYRIA--TO ATTEND. COLUMNIST MUSA SABRI OF AKHBAR DEPLORES CHRONIC INABILITY OF SOVIETS IN PAST TO UNDERSTAND TRULY NATURE OF EGYPTIAN PEOPLE AND LAYS BLAME FOR ABROGATION OF TREATY ON CONTINUOUS AND IMPERIOUS DISDAIN SHOWN BY BREZHNEV FOR EGYPTIANS.

2. SOVIET REACTION SOVIETS ARE GIVING MARCH 16 TASS STATEMENT WIDEST POSSIBLE DISTRIBUTION. SOVIET SECOND SECRETARY CALLED ON COMMERCAIL ATTACHE MARCH 17 AND AFTER GENERAL DISCUSSION PRESENTED COPY OF TASS STATEMENT AND FISHED FOR USG REACTION TO SADAT ABROGATION OF TREATY (COMMATT SAID COMPLETE SURPRISE). SOVIET EMBOFF SAID THEY HAD NOT BEEN SURPRISED AND SUCH A DEVELOPMENT HAD BEEN IN THE AIR FOR A YEAR. EARLIER IN CONVERSATION HE HAD COMPLAINED ABOUT HIGH PRICES EGYPTIANS CHARGING SOVIETS FOR THEIR GOODS BUT AFFIRMED THAT SOVIETS EXPECT TO GO AHEAD WITH EXISTING PROJECTS AND PLAN FOR NEW ONES.

3. OTHER REACTION. COMMENTS BY VARIOUS EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS TO MISSION OFFICERS IN WAKE OF SADAT'S STATEMENT CONTINUE EXTREMELY UPBEAT, ALTHOUGH PROSPECT OF INCREASED ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID IN WAKE OF SADAT'S "HISTORIC STEP" INEVITABLY CREEPS INTO CONVERSATIONS. DIPLOMATIC SOURCE IN CAIRO GENERALLY AGREE THAT SADAT STATEMENT WILL CAUSE INCREASED EGYPTIAN EXPECTATIONS OF LARGER AND LARGER AMERICAN COMMITMENTS TO EGYPT. DURING VISIT BY EMBOFF TO FOREIGN MINISTRY, MFA OFFICER URGED INCREASED AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO DEFENSIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WEAPONS FOR EGYPT IN WAKE OF DEMISE OF SOVIET TREATY. SUCH COMMENTS ALSO BEING HEARD BY DAO MEMBERS. AS EXAMPLE OF CURRENT EGYPTIAN OPTIMISM CONCERNING FUTURE RELATIONS WITH US, PAO WAS VISITED MARCH 17 BY SALAH FARID AND ZAKARIA AL-WARDANI, CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY RESPECTIVELY OF EGYPTIAN-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION, WHO STATED THAT THEY HAD GOTTEN THE WORD TO FORGE AHEAD WITH FORMATION OF ASSOCIATION AND PLANNED TO HOLD MEETING END OF MONTH TO LAUNCH MEMBERSHIP

DRIVE. (COMMENT: FARID AND WARDANI PROBABLY HAD NOT RECEIVED
ANY SPECIFIC GOE APPROVAL TO LAUNCH ASSOCIATION BUT MERELY
TAKING CUE FROM GENERAL ANTI-SOVIET MOOD PREVAILING IN CAIRO).
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